

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 0362

E.O. 11652: GDS
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SUBJECT: JEWISH REFUSENIK ROUND-UP

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. SEVERAL PROMINENT MUSCOVITE AND OTHER REFUSENIKS HAVE EITHER RECENTLY RECEIVED PERMISSION TO LEAVE OR HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT THEY SOON WILL. SOME OF THE POSSIBLE CANDIDATES FOR DEPARTURE INCLUDE IMPORTANT MEMBERS OF THE REFUSENIK AND CIVIL RIGHTS DISSIDENT GROUPS. GRANTING THESE PEOPLE PERMISSION TO LEAVE MAY BE AN ATTEMPT BY THE AUTHORITIES TO SAP THE STRENGTH OF THE MOVEMENT. IT MAY ALSO BE RELATED TO PREPARATIONS FOR THE BELGRADE CSCE REVIEW CONFERENCE. ON A LESS HAPPY NOTE, THE MOSCOW AND UKRAINIAN OVIRS ARE REPORTEDLY REINTERPRETING IN A MORE RESTRICTIVE WAY SEVERAL REGULATIONS REGARDING EMIGRATION PROCEDURE. THE EFFECT OF THESE CHANGES WILL BE TO COMPLICATE SUBSTANTIALLY THE REFUSENIK EFFORTS TO GAIN REVIEW OF THEIR CASES. PLANS FOR A SPECIAL FIFTH ANNIVERSARY SESSION OF THE SUNDAY SEMINAR ARE NOW UNDER WAY. END SUMMARY.

2. THE YEAR HAS BEGUN WELL, AS FAR AS LONG-TERM REFUSENIKS ARE CONCERNED, ACCORDING TO A MOSCOW SOURCE. CASES FROM ROSTOV-NA-DONU, ODESSA AND KRASNOYARSK HAVE CONFIDENTIAL

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RECENTLY BEEN RESOLVED. THIS WILL ALLOW FOUR LONG-TERM DISSIDENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES TO LEAVE. ONE OF THESE, LAZAR LYUBARSKIY FROM ROSTOV, HAD SPENT FOUR YEARS IN PRISON IN CONNECTION WITH THE LENINGRAD AIRPLANE HIJACKING AFFAIR. IN MOSCOW, LIDA VORONINA HAS BEEN TOLD THAT SHE WILL RECEIVE HER EXIT VISA IN APPROXIMATELY ONE WEEK. VORONINA HAS BEEN A REFUSENIK FOR SEVERAL YEARS. HER HUSBAND IS IN ISRAEL, BUT SHE HAS BEEN REFUSED BECAUSE HER MOTHER, A DEVOTED COMMUNIST, HAD DENIED HER PERMISSION TO LEAVE. THIS FACT IS NO

LONGER GOING TO STAND IN THE WAY. IT APPEARS LIKELY THAT THE DECISION TO ALLOW VORONINA TO LEAVE IS RELATED TO HER INCREASING POLITICAL ACTIVISM; RECENTLY SHE TRAVELED TO NAKHODKA TO DOCUMENT THE PROBLEM OF PENTECOSTALISTS LIVING IN THE SOVIET FAR EAST.

3. LYUDA ALEKSEYEVA, PROMINENT IN THE HUMAN RIGHTS MOVEMENT (SHE IS A MEMBER OF THE SOVIET CHAPTER OF AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL AND OF THE CSCE OBSERVATION GROUP) HAS BEEN TOLD THAT SHE AND HER HUSBAND CAN EXPECT TO RECEIVE PERMISSION TO EMIGRATE SOON. SHE IS ONLY ONE-QUARTER JEWISH AND HAD APPLIED SEVERAL MONTHS AGO BUT WAS TURNED DOWN. SHE ATTRIBUTES HER RECEIVING HER VISA TO A DESIRE ON THE PART OF THE AUTHORITIES TO RID THEMSELVES OF ONE OF MOSCOW'S MOST ACTIVE DISSIDENTS. ALEKSEYEVA'S APARTMENT WAS RAIDED ALONG WITH THOSE OF ORLOV AND GINSBURG (MOSCOW 146) ON JAN 4. HER REACTION TO THE RECENT INCREASED HARASSMENT IS TYPICAL OF HER; SHE NOW FEELS THAT IT IS NOT THE MOMENT TO LEAVE. SHE THINKS THAT HER WORK AND THAT OF THE GROUP IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT, AND THAT TO LEAVE NOW WOULD BE AKIN TO DESERTION, AND MIGHT BE SEEN AS RESPONSIVE TO SOVIET PRESSURE. SHE WANTS TO PUT OFF HER DEPARTURE FOR SEVERAL MONTHS AT LEAST AND IF NECESSARY WILL REFUSE TO ACCEPT A VISA.

4. VLADIMIR SLEPAK, MOSCOW'S SENIOR REFUSENIK IN LENGTH
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OF TIME, HAS BEEN RECEIVING UNOFFICIAL SIGNALS FROM OVIR AND OTHER SOVIET ADMINISTRATIVE BODIES THAT HE WILL SOON BE ALLOWED TO LEAVE. SLEPAK HAS TOLD US OF THIS BEFORE (76 MOSCOW 19965) AND HAS STILL NOT DECIDED WHETHER THE SIGNALS ARE GENUINE OR SIMPLY A RUSE TO KEEP HIM QUIET. HE IS CLEAR IN HIS MIND THAT ANY DECISION TO ALLOW HIM TO LEAVE WILL HAVE BEEN MOTIVATED PRIMARILY BY THE PERSONAL INTEREST WHICH PRESIDENT-ELECT CARTER HAS TAKEN IN HIS CASE. SHOULD SLEPAK IN FACT BE GRANTED PERMISSION, IT MIGHT BE INTENDED AS A SIGNAL TO THE NEW ADMINISTRATION.

5. WHILE SOVIET MOTIVATIONS IN ALLOWING THESE PEOPLE TO LEAVE THE USSR AT THIS TIME ARE NOT CLEAR, THEY PROBABLY INCLUDE A DESIRE TO SAP THE DISSIDENT MOVEMENT BY ELIMINATING SOME OF ITS MOST ACTIVE AND BEST-KNOWN MEMBERS. THE DECISION TO ALLOW THESE INDIVIDUALS TO LEAVE, COMBINED WITH THE MODEST INCREASE IN THE TOTAL NUMBER OF JEWS ALLOWED TO EMIGRATE IN THE LAST SEVERAL MONTHS, MAY ALSO BE AIMED AT THE BELGRADE CSCE REVIEW CONFERENCE. EVIDENCE THAT JEWISH EMIGRATION HAD INCREASED BY "X PERCENT" SINCE GIVEN THE DATE COULD FIGURE IN SOVIET ATTEMPTS TO DEFEND HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD.

6. AT THE SAME TIME, OUR SOURCES ALSO REPORT A SIGNIFICANT

TIGHTENING IN PRODCEDURES AT THE MOSCOW AND KIEV OVIRS. THE CHANGES HAVE ALL BEEN APPLIED ONLY SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR. IT IS NOT YET CLEAR WHETHER THERE ARE NEW, ALL-UNION REGULATIONS INVOLVED, OR IF THESE CHANGES RESULT FROM LOCAL INITIATIVES. OUR SOURCES FEAR THE FORMER. THE MOSCOW OVIR HAS REFUSED TO RECONSIDER THE CASES (SO FAR SIX) OF REFUSENIKS AT THE NORMAL SIX-MONTH INTERVAL UNLESS ALL THE DOCUMENTS ARE PRESENTED AGAIN. DURING THE PAST YEAR, IT HAD BEEN ENOUGH FOR A REFUSENIK TO SUBMIT HIS NAME AND CASE REFERENCE FOR THE REVIEW TO TAKE PLACE. ASSEMBLING A COMPLETE NEW DOSSIER IS A HIGHLY TIME-CONSUMING AND PSYCHOLOGICALLY HARROWING
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PROCESS AND ONE THAT MAY SERVE TO DISCOURAGE MANY WOULD-BE EMIGRANTS.

7. THE DECISION OF THE KIEV OVIR IS IN SOME WAYS STILL MORE TROUBLESOME. SEVERAL APPLICANTS FOR REVIEW OF THEIR CASES WERE TOLD THAT A VYZOV THAT HAD BEEN EXTENDED WOULD NO LONGER BE ACCEPTABLE. VYZOVs ARE NORMALLY GOOD FOR ONE YEAR. THE NEW SYSTEM IN KIEV WOULD IN EFFECT REQUIRE AN APPLICANT TO GET A NEW VYZOV EACH TIME HE WANTED TO APPLY. GIVEN THE DIFFICULTIES OF GETTING A VYZOV FROM ISRAEL, THIS CHANGE IN THE PROCEDURE MAY WELL HAVE THE EFFECT OF REDUCING THE NUMBER OF REFUSENIKS WHO MIGHT OTHERWISE TRY FOR REVIEWS OF THEIR CASES AT THE USUAL SIX-MONTH INTERVALS.

8. SEVERAL OF THE INTENDED PARTICIPANTS IN THE ABORTIVE SYMPOSIUM ON JEWISH CULTURAL LIFE IN THE USSR REPORT CONTINUED HARASSMENT BY THE POLICE. THREE OF THE ORGANIZERS ARE STILL UNDER OBVIOUS AND UNPLEASANT SURVEILLANCE. VIKTOR BRAYLOVSKIY HAS BEEN TWICE SUMMONED TO THE PUBLIC PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE, APPARENTLY IN CONNECTION WITH POSSIBLE CHARGES OF PARASITISM OR OF POSSESSING ANTI-SOVIET MATERIALS. MOST OF THE PEOPLE WHO HAD BEEN ACTIVE IN PLANNING THE SYMPOSIUM, HOWEVER, ARE NO WORSE OFF NOW THAN THEY WERE BEFORE THE TWO WEEKS IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING THE SCHEDULED SYMPOSIUM. WHILE MANY ARE SORRY THAT THE SYMPOSIUM DID NOT TAKE PLACE, MOST ARE PLEASED AND IMPRESSED BY THE PUBLICITY WHICH THEIR DIFFICULTIES ENGENDERED IN WESTERN MEDIA.

9. PLANS FOR A SPECIFIC FIFTH ANNIVERSARY SESSION OF THE SUNDAY SEMINAR ARE BEING MADE. THE ANNIVERSARY IS IN MARCH AND IT IS LIKELY THAT THE TWO-DAY SPECIAL SESSION WILL BE DEVOTED TO STRICTLY SCIENTIFIC THEMES. THE PLANNERS ARE MANY OF THE SAME PEOPLE AS FOR THE SYMPOSIUM WHICH WAS TO HAVE TAKEN CARE OF THE CUL-
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TURAL SUBJECTS THAT THE SUNDAY SEMINAR OCCASIONALLY
TREATS. PLANS ARE STILL VAGUE, BUT THE ORGANIZERS
REPORTEDLY WANT SEVERAL FOREIGN SCIENTISTS TO VISIT THE
USSR AT THAT TIME AND ADDRESS THE SESSIONS. THE ORGANIZING
COMMITTEE HOPES THAT THE APOLITICAL NATURE OF THE SUBJECT
MATTER WILL ALLOW THIS SEMINAR TO AVOID THE FATE THAT
BEFELL THE SYMPOSIUM. HOWEVER, THEY ARE NOT IN FACT AT
ALL SANGUINE THAT THE SEMINAR WILL COME OFF.
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